

Documents on Diplomacy: The Source

Benjamin Franklin: Establishing Diplomatic Relations *Passy, September 13, 1783*

Sir: In a former letter I mentioned . . . obtaining a treaty between us and the Emperor of Morocco. We have since received a letter from a person who says . . . he is sent by the Emperor to be the bearer of his answer to the United States, and that he is arrived in Spain on his way to Paris. He has not yet appeared here, and we hardly know what answer to give him. I hope the sending a Minister to that Court, as recommended in my last, has been taken into consideration, or at least that some instructions respecting that nation have been sent to your Minister in Spain, who is better situated than we are for such a negotiation.

The Minister from Denmark often speaks to me about the proposed treaty. . . . No commission to sign it, nor any instructions from Congress relating to it, are yet received; and though pressed, I have not ventured to do any thing further in the affair.

I forward herewith a letter to the Congress from the city of Hamburg. I understand that a good disposition towards us prevails there, which it may be well to encourage.

No answer has yet been given me from the Court of Portugal, respecting the plan of a treaty concerted between its Ambassador here and me.

I send also a copy of a note I received from the Pope's Nuncio. He is very civil on all occasions, and has mentioned the possibility of an advantageous trade America might have with the ecclesiastical State, which he says has two good ports. .

This Court continues favorable to us.

With great esteem &c.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

Source

"Emperor Dead" and ther Historic American Dispatches, Edited by Peter D. Eicher, pp. 32-33; Washington, D.C.: 1997